4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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fashion, a well-scoured copper pan to mix the meal in, a wooden bowl or two, a few horn spoons, a copper *ibrik*, or coffee pot, and a brass lamp. One of the two rooms is used as a storehouse for the maize or grapes, which are spread out and sprinkled with salt in order to preserve them. The other serves as general living and sleeping apartment, where the fire is made on the floor, the smoke escaping through a hole in the roof. Each house has its garden well stocked with fruit and vegetables, and its tobacco plot, surrounded by a high loopholed wall. Each village has, too, its green, in one corner of which is the paved threshing-floor, where the grain is trodden out by horses.

The physical appearance of the women of Albania varies according to the district they inhabit, the tribe to which they belong, and the conditions under which they live. The Skipetars of the Drin and the Gheg and Miridite women of North Albania generally are tall, handsome, and well-made, having good complexions and not infrequently fair hair, which, as the following verse from one of their folk-songs shows, is much admired:—

O maiden so tender,
No pipe of Vizier
Was ever so slender
As thou art, my dear!
The soft silken tresses
Of thy yellow hair,
The glad breeze caresses,
Like flax threads are fair.

They are also dignified in demeanour, capable of undergoing fatigue and hardship, and exceedingly courageous.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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December the housewife makes, besides other sweet cakes, some in the shape of rings, which are called *Koléndhra*. The one first made is termed "the cake of the oxen," and is hung up on the wall "for luck," and left there until the farmer goes out with his team to the fields. On this occasion the cake is taken down and broken to pieces on the head of one of the yoked oxen, and then divided between the pair.

Fire-ceremonies play a great part in the Christmas observances of the Albanian highlanders. As may have already been remarked in connection with birth-ceremonies, a protective and salutary character appears to attach to the fire on the hearth, and not only on such occasions, but on the eve of every important festival, the Albanian peasants light fires and keep them burning until sunset on the following day, even in summer; and from the crackling, or exploding, noises emitted by the wood in burning, they learn when the enemies of their house are conspiring against them, and whether the flocks will thrive, or the contrary. On ordinary occasions they consider it inauspicious when the thick end of a log burns before the thin, and are careful not to place one log across another. On Christmas Eve, however, all such precautions are considered unnecessary. The fire is piled up as high as the safety of the house will permit, as this is supposed to neutralise all evil effects of the non-observance of the foregoing precautions during the coming year. The largest log that can be found is brought home at sunset, when all the family, who are reunited for the festival, rise to greet it with the words, "Welcome, our log! God has destined thee for the fire! Bring

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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789 good luck to us and to our flocks!" Before the
372 family sit down to supper a small quantity of food from every dish on the table is placed upon the burning log. Some branches of a cherry tree are also put on the fire, and, when partially burnt, are taken off again and kept.

857 Soon after midnight, the boys, in companies of from
533 ten to fifteen, go singing from house to house, and receive, in reward for their carols, a ring-cake from each housewife.

527 On the Eve of St. Basil (January 1) the fire is
789 also kept burning all night, and the half-burnt cherry
787 branches are again thrown on and withdrawn, to be
[372] wholly consumed on the Eve of the Epiphany, when the ashes are collected and strewn in the vineyard. The fire of St. Basil's Eve is often watched by an expectant mother, who thus hopes to ensure an easy confinement. In the morning people wash themselves and their children with "unspoken-over" water, and draw omens from the character, gay or sad, of the person who first enters the house. A cock is also sacrificed, for it is auspicious to spill blood in the house on St. Basil's Day.

789 On the Eve of Epiphany the fire is also kept alight
[787] all night, and in the morning the character of the coming seasons is prophesied from the set of the wind. If a south wind blows, it indicates a full harvest and sickness; if the wind is from the east, a scanty harvest and a healthy year are predicted; if from the north, a late spring. The Christians, on the Feast of Epiphany, sprinkle their vineyards with holy water, in the hope of ensuring a plentiful crop of

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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grapes. They also place at the four corners of each plot four vine stems tied together with straw bands, and under them a piece of a cake called a *kophtopite*, made specially for the purpose, wine being one of its ingredients. A round loaf is rolled from the gate to the middle of the vineyard, and then distributed to the ravens, crows, and other birds which damage the grapes, with this invitation, "Assemble, O crows and ravens, so that we may eat and drink, and that you may do us no more harm!"

On the 1st of February, St. Tryphon's Day, it is considered lucky to work in the fields, but not in the vineyards. On the 2nd, the "Feast of the Purification," all kinds of small pulse and cereals are cooked together in a pot, and this mess, called *karkasina*, forms the staple food of the day. On the eve of the 1st of March, a kind of divination is performed by throwing into the fire a particular kind of leaf and pronouncing at the same time the name of a member of the family. If the leaf makes an explosive noise while burning, it is held to be a good omen for the person indicated, but if it burns quietly, the reverse.[1] On this vigil a clod of earth, on which a few drops of wolf's milk have been sprinkled, is thrown against the door in order that the cows and goats may milk well. In the morning the cattle are whipped with cherry branches, in order that they may enjoy good health, and people wash themselves with wine with a view to preserving themselves from vermin during the summer. As an additional precaution, they also catch a flea, which they impale on the point of a new

[1] The ancient φυλλοσπορία.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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of these parti-coloured bracelets, with a tiny gold coin attached, was, on the 1st of March (Old Style), presented by the Roumanian Consul-General to each lady of his acquaintance, and I, for one, religiously wore my charm against the power of the March sun, which in the East generally is said to "blacken" the complexion, until the month was out. It was not, however, finally thrown to the swallows, but carried off by an English visitor as a curio.

On the 25th of this month the women go through the house beating on copper pans, in order to drive out any poisonous snakes that may have intended to take up their abode there. The two last days of March and the first of April are called *Plyáteté*, a word signifying "old," and referring to the past season, personified as "Old Mother Winter." If by the last-mentioned date Spring has not yet fully set in, the blame is laid at the door of the old women, who are evidently held to be in league with "Old Mother Winter."

On Easter Eve in some places, Selitza, for instance, the young men assemble with lighted torches, which they wave about as they walk in procession through the village. Arrived at the river, they throw them in, crying, "*Koré-ya* (O Maiden)! We throw thee into the water with these torches, so mayest thou never return!" the *Koré* evidently referring, as Von Hahn suggests,[1] to the malevolent supernals, Vilas, Dragonas, &c., before described. When the priest comes to bless the house on Easter Day, the women throw after him, as he leaves, hot embers from the

[1] *Albanesische Studien*, p. 160.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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789 hearth, in order that he may take away with him all
788 danger from fire for the coming year.

St. John's Eve is observed in Albania with the
789 customary bonfire, to leap over which is considered so
372 salutary that even the old people venture to do so at least once. A curious ceremony, performed about this season, when the spring sowing is concluded, may also be here mentioned. Standing with his back to the plough, the farmer rubs part of the
[136] handle with earth in the belief that the wild swine will thus be prevented from damaging his crops.

789 On the day on which the new moon is first seen, all possible work is avoided, and no important task of any kind, such as ploughing, sowing, or harvesting, is commenced, for it would be sure to be unsuccessful. The girls and children look at the moon through a sieve, and rub their faces with a piece of silver, while they sing:

[539]

Young moon!
Young maid!
Health to me;
Ill to thee!
Head as soft as dough be thine!
Head as hard as stone be mine!

777 The 9th, 19th, and 29th days of every month are considered unlucky, as is also the Tuesday of every week, for setting out on a journey, or commencing any kind of work. Friday is also an inauspicious day
[241] for sowing, and Saturday for beginning to plough or dig.

326 make all of these implements out of trade iron, it is unlikely that the rural smiths, like the one measured in Mirdita, do much more than [439] horseshoeing. No one in Albania can make steel implements. Not only the material, but the finished implements themselves, must be imported, and hence they are expensive. That is why saws and augers are scarce in the mountains, where almost the only steel tools seen are files, useful for sharpening iron tools and for woodworking.

322 This explains the primitive nature of Gheg woodworking. Most wooden objects which require special tools or skills are bought in the market towns. Here 3 kinds of woodworking specialists carry on their crafts: the coopers, turners, and joiners. The coopers make tubs and buckets for kitchen use, including churns, butter firkins, and casks for storing grain. The material of which these are made is pear wood. The turner cuts out on his lathe various parts for looms, to be set up later; bobbins, spools, reelers, winders, and spool frames. The joiners provide the mountaineers with solid, ornately decorated chests of pine wood, as well as cradles in which to carry their babies, of which more later.

The Gheg at home in his mountains is a jack-of-all-trades. He may not be able to manufacture the special objects listed above, but he can adze out beams for his house, put together a new plough during the winter months when there is little work out of doors, or build one of his massive chairs. Professional carpenters are rare, although some men may show more skill in this than others.

372 In Ghegnia, as in most of the primitive world known to anthropologists, it is the custom not to let fires go out, for it is hard to start a new one. Sometimes a householder will walk several miles to borrow a glowing coal from a neighbor. In 1929 and 1930 most of the Ghegs were making fire with flint and steel or with old-fashioned dry-wick lighters. They did this slyly, and in my presence only when they could not borrow a match from me. King Zog had sold the match monopoly to the Swedish match trust, which had promptly set a price of 5 cents a box on penny matches. The king had at the same time prohibited the use of flint

●372 and steel or lighters. This left the mountaineers in an unenviable position—they could not afford matches nor legally start fires by other means. Outside the market towns, however, their illegal actions passed unnoticed.

342 Several authorities, particularly Nopcsa, have concerned themselves with north Albanian house types. These are usually divided, on the basis of ground plan, room arrangement, and architecture into a number of classes: simple one-roomed huts, usually employed in the summer only by shepherds on high mountain pastures; 2-roomed, one-storied houses, with one room for animals and the other for the family; the so-called veranda houses, with a wooden front porch and columns, reminiscent of the Homeric hall; and finally the *kulla* or defensible stronghold (fig. 8, *a*).

The 2-roomed house seems to be basic in the mountains, although historically the more complicated structures have made these edifices rare. The veranda house, although old in the Mediterranean, was apparently late to reach this refuge area, being spread with Islam. The *kulla*, or stronghold, is said to have come at the same time as the veranda house. Both reached Kastrati and Shala about 1850, being introduced by one man who had lived in Istanbul, Liho Çuni.

For building materials the Ghegs are strictly limited to local supplies, since transportation [135] is so difficult. In the region designated on figure 2 as "serpentine highland,"[2] the stone is hard to cut, and unsuited for fine masonry except in the hands of experts. Furthermore, lime is found in few places only, and it is usually impossible to make mortar without many tedious trips with pack-horses or donkeys. In this region many of the houses are made of wood, with squared logs laid on each other and held in place by vertical or diagonal crosspieces. Others are made of wattle: vertical poles side by side, with flexible wands woven in and out between them. At times this wattling is bare, but usually it is covered with some sort of plaster or mud.

[333] Where there is plenty of suitable stone and lime, these materials are used. The simpler, poorer houses are of dry masonry, but the majority are built with mortar. Roofing material varies from thatch to shakes, slate, and tile. Years ago thatch was much more com-

-14a-

[1] [See cat. 116, p. 108 -- Analyst]
[2] [See cat. 116 p. 8a -- Analyst]